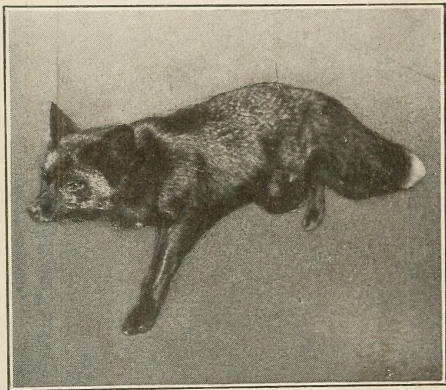


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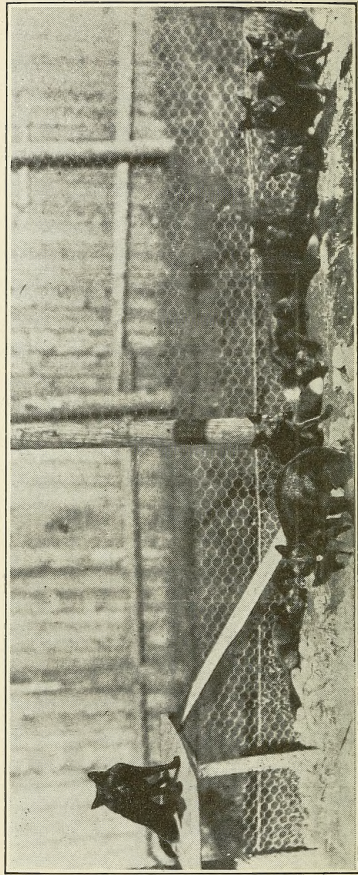
ONEY IN FOX FARMING

By
STEPHEN A. GILLIS



International Letter Club
Publishers
JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY

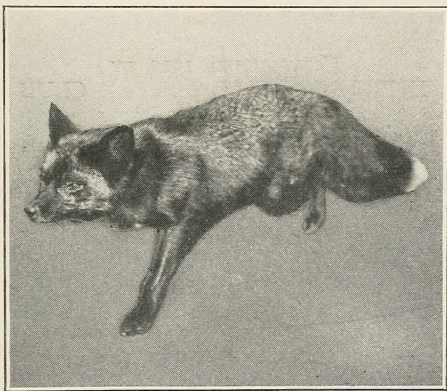
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A happy family—father, mother and their seven children. These foxes made over \$60,000 for Dr. W. E. Williams.

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No. 1.

INTRODUCTION

THIS little treatise on fox farming is not intended to teach the ranchers of Prince Edward Island, or elsewhere, anything about the industry. It aims to be a guide to investors and inexperienced persons who intend to take up fur farming.

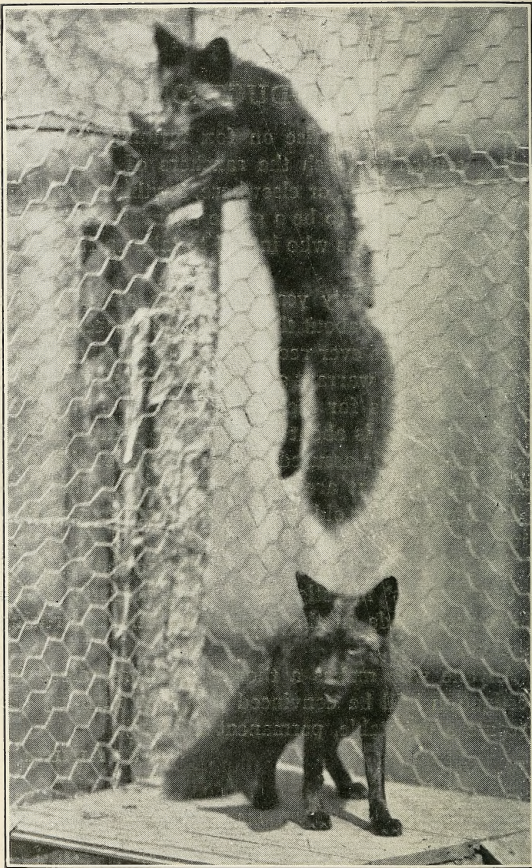
In the past twenty years the price of silver fox fur has increased about three hundred per cent. Even the lowest prices ever recorded for good silver skins are sufficient to warrant a fair profit for the farming of those animals for their pelts.

The industry is about twenty-eight years old and its permanency is assured by the number of domesticated animals that are now in captivity. The mortality among the old foxes has been exceedingly low.

The facts contained in this work are the result of a two months' investigation of the industry which the writer made in the interest of an Advertising Agency.

Anyone who makes a thorough, unprejudiced investigation will be convinced that fox farming has become a profitable, permanent industry.

THE AUTHOR.



Watching visitors.

MONEY IN FOX FARMING

Fur Trading has built up one of the oldest and wealthiest corporations on the American Continent—The Hudson Bay Company. From the very earliest ages the skins of animals have been used to protect man from cold. The supply of wild fur-bearers has gradually lessened, some species being now almost extinct. Not only has the supply lessened, the demand has gradually increased. Today ponies, kids, lambs, pups, rabbits, are killed in large numbers to supply the demand for furs.

The Methods of Trapping wild animals have been cruel in the extreme. Often the trapper does not visit his traps more than once or twice a week. An animal caught by a leg or a part of the body in a steel trap may live for hours or days suffering the tortures of pain and fear. Mink will break its teeth against the steel jaws of the trap and tear the flesh from its own limbs.

Domesticating Wild Animals.—Some of the animals would be taken alive by the trapper and those caught out of season would be kept in captivity until the fur would be prime. In this way it was discovered that many of them could be tamed, and it was only reasonable to expect that attempts would be made to rear or breed

the more expensively-furred species under domestic conditions.

The Silver Fox is a color phase of the common red fox which is found on every continent. It has always ranked among the most expensive fur-bearers, partly because of its rarity but more especially on account of the excellent and peculiar quality of its fur, which is long and soft—almost downy. It is dark, sometimes jet black, with a sprinkling of light or silvery hair, particularly over the hips and forehead. It is those light hairs that gave it the name “silver” or “silver black.” Upon close examination it will be noticed that they are banded; or black on the extreme tips, then light—and dark again near the skin. The tip of the long bushy tail is generally white.

The History of Fox Farming may be said to date from 1887, when Charles Dalton, of Prince Edward Island, began experimenting with red foxes. Robert T. Oulton also tried to breed foxes in captivity and a little later formed a partnership with Dalton. The persistence with which these two men studied the habits and characteristics of the fox is largely responsible for the success of the industry.

Most of the early attempts to breed foxes in other provinces seem to have met with failure. The animals would burrow into the ground and escape. They would fail to breed

or the litters would die of sickness or disease or would be killed.

Difficulties Overcome.—Gradually it was learned that foxes are highly nervous during the breeding season and require all the seclusion possible. Again, it was discovered that they are monogamous, each having but one mate.

The Modern Ranch solved the problem of holding the foxes. It is made of a large outside inclosure of wire netting sunk into the ground to prevent the foxes from burrowing their way to freedom, and overhung at the top to prevent them from climbing out. Within the inclosure are smaller pens, also made of wire in the same manner. These usually enclose a space about twenty-five by fifty feet. Each pair of foxes is provided with a separate pen.

The invention of the artificial den which is built within this pen has been the means of saving many litters after birth.

This nest is built inside a small house in imitation of the wild den. It is ventilated so as to be sanitary and is well insulated so that the heat from the bodies of the old foxes will provide plenty of warmth for the pups.

The ranch is usually built on dry ground, in a wood that affords shade in summer and shelter in the winter.

Growth of the Industry.—Previous to 1909 nothing much was heard of the fox industry.

In that year there were in all about fifteen ranches in Prince Edward Island. There were also a few in other provinces. In 1899 or 1900 it was reported that Charles Dalton received \$1,800 for a silver skin sold in London. A demand for breeders started shortly afterwards and gradually increased until 1910 when the price of breeding stock went up by leaps and bounds.

“Fur Farming in Canada”—A bulletin published by the Conservation Commission of the Canadian Government, quotes prices of five months old silver pups of good Prince Edward stock as follows:

Sept. 1909...	\$3,000.00	per pair
“ 1910...	4,000.00	“ “
“ 1911...	6,000.00	“ “
“ 1912...	10,000.00	“ “
“ 1913...	16,000.00	“ “

The author of the handbook quotes the price of proved breeders at \$25,000 to \$35,000 per pair, in 1913.

About 1910 the thrifty conservative farmers of Prince Edward Island began to draw their little hoards from the savings banks and invest in foxes. Private and corporate companies were formed by the score. The stock in these corporations was quickly taken up by the farmers, by business and professional men.

The industry quickly spread to the neighboring provinces, to Ontario, Quebec, New-

foundland and some of the Northern States of the Union which enjoy a climate favorable to the production of good fur. Even the Russian Government became interested in the new industry which sprang up in Prince Edward Island, and in 1912 sent a representative to the province to gather facts about fur-farming. A fur farm is now in operation about seven miles from Petrograd. The pens are built on the model of the Prince Edward Island ranches.

At the beginning of 1915 there were over three hundred and fifty fox ranches on Prince Edward Island, representing almost twenty millions of dollars of invested capital. It is estimated that fully eighty-five per cent. of the world's supply of captive silver foxes is in Prince Edward Island.

The Value of Fox Fur varies greatly. A red fox pelt is seldom worth more than five to ten dollars. A few selected red fox skins from Prince Edward Island are said to have brought fifteen to seventeen dollars on the London fur market. In the early stages of fox farming the price of good silver skins probably did not average more than \$200 each.

In an editorial headed "Truth About the Fox Industry,"—"The Daily Patriot," Charlottetown,—January 29, 1915—publishes a list of the prices which Charles Dalton received for two hundred and three (203) silver skins sold in London from 1900 to 1914.



Panting with the heat and frightened.

The paper guarantees the correctness of the figures, which were taken from the original vouchers. The two hundred and three (203) skins were sold for \$163,184.22 or an average of \$778.74 each. One of these skins brought about \$2,700.

Cross or patch fox pelts are worth \$25 to \$300 each. Blue fox from \$25 to \$75 per pelt.

Imitations.—There are imitations of fox fur on the market which unscrupulous furriers try to palm off as genuine. The following quotation is from "Fur Farming in Canada:"

"The imitation of the silver fox is also impossible because of the color of the silver-banded black overhairs. The nearest imitation is the German-dyed pointed fox, made from a common red fox dyed black, which has white hairs from the badger or other animals sewed into it or fastened in by adhesives. It is easily distinguished from the silver black fox fur and is not favored except as a medium-priced article. It is not nearly so beautiful as silver fox. The silver band in a genuine skin is not white, but silvery, and the whole skin possesses a gloss not equalled by a dyed product. The dyeing process has also the disadvantage of rendering the fur less durable. The undyed skin is whitish and the underfur close to the skin is a light drab or pale blue color."

Ranch Bred Pelts command better prices than the pelts of wild animals. Again we quote from "Fur Farming in Canada."

"As many animals—in fact the large majority of the animals caught in the wilds—are of poor quality; they will need to be subjected to methods of rigid

selection for many generations to come if fur of good quality is to be produced. Only a few of the domestic stock are as poorly furred as the average wild stock—among the wild stock the poor color and the coarseness of the fur are notable. There are exceptional individuals of excellent quality among the wild foxes, but none yet examined is the equal of the selected domestic animals in silkiness and sheen of coat."

Wild foxes have no regard for color or fur when choosing their mate. A finely-furred silver male might mate with a poorly furred red female or vice versa. The offspring from such parents would be called "cross" or "patch."

The fur of the wild fox is injured by coming in contact with brush and shrubs and other injurious substances. It may be injured by trapping or shooting. The animal may be killed while the fur is in poor condition. Feed also has much to do with the quality of the fur. The ranch fox may be carefully mated. He is carefully fed and protected from substances that injure the fur. He can be kept in a climate that favors the best fur. Then he can be killed in a humane manner when the fur is in its very best condition. Commenting on this subject "Fur Farming in Canada" says:

"In our opinion, however, the prime killing of wild stock after careful fattening would probably increase the value of the pelts one hundred per cent., but they would still be less than half as valuable as the best grade of selected Island stock. Excellent foundation stock improved through several generation by

selection and feeding, has done its work in a fashion similar to the development of our breeds of domestic stock."

The most convincing proof of the superiority of Ranch-bred fox pelts is a comparison of their prices with those received for the wild pelts. The following figures were compiled by "The Daily Patriot" and published in its article "Truth About the Fox Industry:":

Comparison with the average of all pelts sold in London:

	Average price received per pelt for all pelts sold in London.	Average price received per pelt by a single Prince Edward Island Rancher.*
Year.		
1905.....	\$146.59	\$553.63
1906.....	166.93	1,216.66
1907.....	157.11	821.23
1908.....	168.91	589.51
1909.....	244.12	622.29
1910.....	414.37	1,173.26
1911.....	290.01	899.69

*The rancher referred to is Charles Dalton.

Best Climate for Fox Ranching.—Foxes thrive well in a climate that touches zero in winter and is not extremely hot in summer. Very cold open country makes fur coarse and shaggy, while forest renders it finer. Fur from warmer climates is light and thin. The climate of Prince Edward Island is claimed to be the best in the world

for the fox. "Fur Farming in Canada" says:

"Beyond a doubt the finest foxes in captivity at the present time are the descendants of foxes captured in Prince Edward Island."

Some are of the opinion that the Prince Edward Island fox is a distinct variety having been segregated for ages, or since the Island was first separated from the mainland. Fox breeders from Alaska have brought foxes to Prince Edward Island to be ranched, claiming that the climate there will improve the fur of their animals.

The climate in parts of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Maine is very similar to that of Prince Edward Island.

Money in Fox Farming.—The pioneer ranchers have proved conclusively that foxes can be profitably raised for their pelts, even when the price of fur was very much lower than it is today. All the old ranchers of Prince Edward Island who have stuck to the industry show evidence of having made considerable money. Charles Dalton—now Hon. Chas. Dalton—was but a poor trapper when he started breeding foxes. He has recently donated \$50,000 to the St. Dunstan's College, and established a Tuberculosis Sanatorium for Prince Edward Island. Oulton, Tuplin, Gordon and many other old ranchers have been made wealthy by raising foxes for their pelts.

The boom in breeding stock from 1910

to 1914 has made many people wealthy in a season or less. In the early part of 1913 a young medical student bought a pair of foxes for \$18,000. He paid \$1,800 as a deposit, the balance to be paid after the first litter was born. In April of the same year the pair reared seven silver pups which realized about \$60,000 when they were less than six months old. This is said to be the highest price ever received for a year's offspring from any pair of animals at that age. There are hundreds of cases where stenographers, clerks, farmers and others have invested a few hundred dollars and in less than one year received profits representing from one to five hundred per cent. on their investment.

J. E. B. McCready, Dominion Publicity Agent for Prince Edward Island, has stated that the average dividend paid in 1913 was about sixty per cent. of the total capital invested. Some companies paid one hundred per cent. or over. A few with a very low capitalization paid three to five hundred per cent. and more. Even in 1914 many companies were able to pay substantial dividends in spite of the disturbed financial conditions caused by the war.

How to Take Up Fox Farming.—People living in cities and in the warmer climates can take up fox farming without having to devote their time to it. In Prince Edward



Watching the camera man.

Island there are reliable experienced ranchers who will ranch foxes for a percentage of the profits or for a stated cash amount. At the present time the usual charge is from \$150 to \$200 per pair for one year, or ten per cent. of the profits. These charges include the care of the young from the time of their birth, in April or May, until about September.

The percentage basis is to be recommended to inexperienced persons or to those who cannot see their foxes before buying. By this arrangement the rancher assumes all the risk of expense. He would not do this were he not reasonably sure that ten per cent. of the profits would be equal at least to his outlay for feed and caretakers' time. People with no previous knowledge of fox farming who live in a climate suitable to foxes could start in the industry with cheap cross or red foxes, on a small capital. A small ranch could be built very cheaply. But no inexperienced person should attempt to breed expensive silvers without employing a competent caretaker. Farmers, however, might start fox farming after spending a few weeks with a practical rancher.

It is always advisable to start with the best foundation stock obtainable, providing capital and experience warrant it. We would hardly expect an inexperienced person to put \$25,000 or \$50,000 into a manufacturing plant and make a success of it, without

employing a capable manager. The same thing applies to fox farming.

Persons with limited capital could enhance their chances for profit by forming a partnership with a few friends, and buying more than one pair of foxes. This reduces the risk.

When Buying Foxes three things should be carefully considered: fur quality, pedigree and productiveness. "Fur Farming" gives the following rules for judging the skin value of live animals:

COLOR.—Glossy black on the neck and wherever no silver hairs are found. The black must be of a bluish cast all over the body rather than a reddish. The under-fur of the silver and black foxes is a dark slate next to the skin.

SILVER HAIRS.—Pure silver bands—not white nor very prominent. In the costliest skins there are only a few silver hairs, which are well scattered over the pelt. Flakiness which is the appearance of whitish silver hairs placed close together in patches is objectionable.

TEXTURE.—Buyers pass judgment on the skins by drawing the hand over the fur. The softest furs are the most valuable. The quality of softness is referred to as "silkiness."

GLOSS.—The sheen must be evident. It is caused by the perfect health of the animal and the fineness of the hair as well as by hereditary influences. Woods and humid atmosphere also favor this important quality.

WEIGHT.—A good fox skin will weigh at least one pound, the weight usually varying from ten to nineteen ounces. The thick, long fur makes the weight. This is a very important point, as the heavy fur is more durable and handsome.

SIZE.—The value of silver fox pelts increases with size.

Rust is always an indication of red ancestry. It is detected by reddish hair just inside the ear.

Pedigree and Productiveness. — When buying foxes it would be well to have the rancher produce a sworn statement, giving the pedigree of the animals for at least three to five generations back. In Prince Edward Island this statement could easily be verified by inquiry from neighboring ranchers. Competition and jealousy among the ranchers are keen. If one rancher misrepresents his foxes, his neighbor will surely tell it. The pedigree should show the line of fecundity. A fox from a litter of five, six or seven whose parents were also from large litters, is always more prolific than a fox from smaller litters.

Long-term payments are often extended to purchasers of foxes. A deposit of not less than ten per cent. of the purchase price is made and the balance payable in six months, one year or even a longer term. It would not be wise, however, for small investors to make a deposit on a pair of foxes depending on the increase to pay the balance. The foxes might fail to breed or might die, though the mortality among mature foxes is very light.

Sometimes the vendor of expensive foxes will furnish a guarantee that the animals will produce young the following year. Prospective purchasers should visit at least three, four or half a dozen ranches before making a selection. Ranchers who have confidence in the superiority of their stock encourage such an investigation. Good fur speaks for itself even to the inexperienced eye.

Vixens—female foxes—that have failed to breed for two consecutive years should be avoided as breeding stock.

Cross Bred Foxes are, as their name implies, a cross between a silver and a red. They are also called patch foxes. The offspring of a pure silver and a cross fox will show a greater percentage of silver blood. Sometimes part of the litter will be all silver and part all red. By breeding these silvers, offspring of cross parents, with pure silvers a strain of pure silver can be established in from three to five generations. The pelt of a silver offspring from cross parents might be just as valuable as the pelt of a pure silver, but the animal would not be so valuable for breeding purposes on account of its containing a percentage of red blood. Thus it can be understood how important is the pedigree of a silver fox, which may have the appearance of a perfectly pure silver, and yet contain a good percentage of red blood.

There are companies and individuals that make a business of breeding up crossed foxes. One pair of crosses that was bought for a few hundred dollars showed a splendid record. To the inexperienced person, they had the appearance of being almost pure red. Yet out of the twelve pups which they produced in three years, six showed a large percentage of silver, one pair of which sold for \$11,000. Crossed foxes can be bought for \$100 to \$2,000 per pair.

Cost of Ranching is very small in proportion to production. In Prince Edward Island the cost of feed, which is given very careful consideration, is from \$25 to \$100 per year, per pair of foxes. The feed consists of meat, fish, biscuit, etc. In the whelping season the female is often fed milk and eggs. Old hens and rabbits are frequently fed alive.

Farmers keeping a few pairs of foxes could reduce the cost of feed to \$10 per fox or less, as much waste product could be used up. When we consider that the fox comes to maturity in eight months and reproduces rapidly, we can readily see that if the price of pelts dropped to \$40 or \$50 each, silver foxes could still be raised profitably for their pelts by farmers. The work of attending to ten pairs of foxes would be no more than that of attending to a few cows. One caretaker can easily attend to forty or fifty

pairs of foxes. His salary runs from \$400 to \$1,500 per year.

Raising Foxes for Their Pelts.—Government reports quote the increase of all foxes in Prince Edward Island in 1913 as one and three-quarters per pair. These reports also show that about one-half of the vixens did not breed in that year, or did not rear their young to maturity.

Considering the number of inexperienced persons who have taken up fox ranching and the number of wild and cheap foxes that were included, this seems an exceptionally good record. In many cases cheap foxes would be kept in a barrel or cask near the barn. Wild foxes cannot be depended upon to breed in captivity. If we consider only good ranch-bred foxes the average increase per pair will probably double these figures.

Suppose an individual or company started fox ranching with three pairs of silver foxes bought at \$5,000 per pair. Ten foxes—five pairs—would be a fair estimate of increase for the first year. Say two pairs were added to the ranch and the pelts of the other three pairs were sold at \$500 each—almost \$300 below the present average value—or a total of \$3,000. If we value the five pairs at the same rate and allow ten per cent.—\$500—for ranching expenses, we have a clear profit of \$2,500 or sixteen per cent. of the original

investment. If we reckon \$1,000 for each of the pelts we have double that amount. Suppose we allow ten per cent. for depreciation of capital, which is much higher than the average death rate of the animal, we still have the capital increased by thirty per cent. In this way a large ranch could be built up in a few years, while the original investment was earning good returns.

Raising Foxes for Breeders.—Since 1910 no silver foxes have been killed for their pelts in Prince Edward Island. The only pelts sold from that province have been from foxes that had become too old to breed or had died or were accidentally killed. In fact, these ranchers do not expect to ever have to sell the pelts of good breeding animals. While the present prices of silver fur are maintained, the price of good breeding stock is not likely to drop below \$5,000 per pair.

Considering the case just illustrated, suppose the three pairs of foxes were sold for breeders at \$5,000 per pair—\$15,000 in all, or almost one hundred per cent. on the original investment. Here again the two pairs would be added to build up the ranch.

To some, these illustrations may seem overdrawn; but they are much below hundreds of actual cases. On the other hand, certain conditions might be met that would

wipe out all the profits for one or two years. But such conditions would be the exception and not the rule.

Seeing the Ranches.—Anyone who contemplates fur farming should visit Prince Edward Island during the summer or autumn months. The fur is poorest in summer and prime in December and January. But visitors are not allowed near the ranches from December until June. This is the breeding season when precaution is taken to see that the foxes have all the seclusion possible. They become quite accustomed to the keeper and will often eat feed from his hand, but strange noises, sights or scents will frighten them into their dens. To frighten the animals at this period may mean their failure to breed or the loss of pups.

The most critical time of all is the whelping season, usually in April or May. Sometimes the male is of an ugly disposition and must be removed to keep him from harming the young. Again, he may be more affectionate than the mother, and helps to calm her if she becomes excited. Sometimes the mother does not appear from the nest for several days after the young are born, the male carrying the feed to her.

There seems to be a strong instinct among foxes to hide their young from their enemies, particularly the bear. If the mother fox becomes excited or thinks her young are

endangered, she may carry them out of the nest and bury them in the snow or mud where they will freeze unless discovered in time by the keeper.

Prince Edward Island is the world's centre for fur farming, and in the summer offers many attractions for the tourist. It is a small thickly-settled farming country and has been named "The Garden of the Gulf." Its extreme length is only about one hundred and fifty miles and its greatest width about thirty miles. The whole Island is laid off with country roads that afford beautiful driveways. There are streams of clear water on almost every farm, and numerous small rivers flowing toward the sea. These are well stocked with trout. There is an abundance of deep-sea fishing; cod, lobsters, haddock, mackerel, herring are plentiful.

Shooting.—Geese, brant, duck, plover and all kinds of water fowl are found along the shore. Woodcock and partridge are also plentiful.

The open season for shooting is: Brant, April 20th to December 31st; duck, August 20th to December 31st; geese, September 15th to May 9th; martin, mink, muskrat, November 1st to March 31st; partridge, October 15th to November 15th; plover, August 1st to December 31st; rabbits, November 1st to January 1st; snipe, September 1st to December 31st.

There is plenty of opportunity for boating and bathing and for golf, cricket and tennis.

Board may be had for \$1 to \$5 per day, or \$4 to \$25 per week. Cottages may be rented for \$45 and up for the season. Camping grounds can be had without cost.

Prince Edward Island is about twenty-four hours by rail from Boston—boat from Point Du Chene to Summerside. The Plant Line Steamers ply between Boston and Charlottetown, and the Eastern S.S. Company's boats between Boston and St. John, New Brunswick. The fare from Boston is ten to fifteen dollars.

Present Opportunities.—The price of foxes was at its highest pitch when the war started, and at once rapidly declined to about one-half the former figures. Speculators and promoters had done much damage to the reputation of the industry. But no companies were found in financial distress at the beginning of 1915. The reasons for this are that as a rule the companies own their foxes with no liabilities except their capital stock, and the expenses are insignificant.

At the time of writing foxes are changing hands at from \$4,000 to \$6,000 per pair. The general tendency among the ranchers is to hold their animals for higher figures. An advertisement for two pairs of good foxes appeared on the front page of one of the

leading dailies which is read by most of the ranchers. This ad. appeared in the early part of February and brought only two replies. One pair of the foxes were year-old silver pups of good stock and were bought for \$5,000.

The present indications are that this year's pups—good silvers—may be had for from \$4,000 to \$6,000 per pair, possibly less. When the war is over and normal conditions return, the prices of breeding stock are pretty sure to go higher. The shrewd investor who is thinking of taking up fur farming could make no mistake by buying his foundation stock on a low market.

Knockers are always in evidence. As a rule the more prosperous any new enterprise the more numerous the "knockers." Among the critics of fox farming will be found people who have not got into the industry and are jealous of the success of their neighbors. Others have been the victims of unscrupulous promoters, while still others are disappointed by dividends of only eight or ten per cent. Many of these investors are farmers with no business experience, and look upon a company's failure to pay dividends as an indication of bankruptcy, even though the company may own forty or fifty thousand dollars' worth of ranching stock and foxes unencumbered.

Again, there are those who have mistaken criticism of speculators as criticism of the

industry. Even well intentioned persons have been misled by this criticism. The writer has investigated official reports that were very unfair in that they were greatly misleading. As an instance, one of these reports stated that the average price of silver fox pelts sold in London last June was only \$118. The inference could be drawn from the report that this price represented the average price of ranch-bred silver pelts. The report failed to mention that no animals were killed for their pelts in Prince Edward Island in recent years on account of the high price of breeding stock, and also that in one sale from a Prince Edward Island ranch in 1910 twenty-five pelts brought an average price of \$1,339.48 per pelt.

“Knockers” should never be taken seriously until their criticism has been investigated. As a general rule they are failures and never-do-wells.

Other Fur Animals Farmed.—The fur farming of Prince Edward Island is not confined to foxes. Mink, fisher, otter and beaver are farmed, also karakule sheep, the producers of Persian lamb. These, however, are but a side line to fox farming. In some of the other provinces they are more extensively raised.

Government Regulations.—The government of Prince Edward Island has given more attention to the fox industry than that

of any of the other provinces. This is only to be expected considering the large number of citizens that are engaged in it. In 1913 \$37,172 was collected in taxes on young foxes.

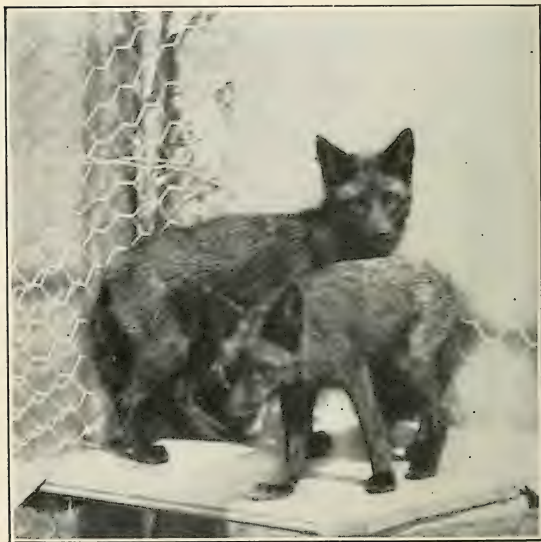
The Silver Fox Breeders Association of Prince Edward Island was organized in 1912 and was incorporated by a special act of the legislature in April, 1915. The objects of this association are to protect the interests of the industry in every way possible.

Special legislation was also enacted with a view to safeguarding the interests of purchasers of breeding foxes and investors buying stock in corporations. This legislation empowers the government to regulate the industry through the Fox Breeders Association. Standards of registration will be established. The animals will be graded and registered according to their pedigrees. This will enable a person to verify the pedigree of any animal by inquiry from the Association.

Summing Up.—To sum up conditions of the fox industry, we find good silver fox fur demanding big prices. This can be verified by inquiring the price of good silver fox sets at any reliable furriers or at department stores. There has not been enough of these foxes in the American market to make their wearing fashionable. An increase in the output is going to increase the demand, also the price, just as the price of eggs has

increased with in increased production during the past few years.

Old ranchers who have made fox ranching their life work have become wealthy while inexperienced persons and farmers with no business methods have made large amounts of money by conducting a haphazard business. The industry is but in its infancy and offers a good opportunity for persons with little capital.



Six-months-old pups.

It must be remembered that buying wild stock or animals without pedigree for breeders is always speculative, and attempts to breed expensive animals in unfavorable climates are sure to result in disappointment.

A few general rules might be laid down for the amateur who is contemplating fox farming.

1. Climatic conditions are essential.
2. The best breeding stock offers the best advantages.
3. Do not buy expensive foxes without seeing them.
4. Insist on knowing pedigree of pure silvers or high-grade crosses.
5. Have your foxes ranched by a reliable rancher of good reputation. A straight charge is usually cheaper, but the percentage basis is safer for amateurs.
6. If building your own ranch employ the services of a good, experienced caretaker of steady habits and good reputation. Include some extra remuneration for results in his contract.
7. It will pay the amateur to have less than five pairs of foxes ranched by someone else in preference to building his own ranch.

Sources of Information.—The Dominion Government Publicity Agent, Charlotte-

town, Prince Edward Island, will furnish information on the industries of the Island to all enquirers.

The Silver Fox Breeders Association of Prince Edward Island will answer enquiries relating to the fox industry. Banks, business and professional men are usually reliable sources of information.

The best and surest source of information is to be on the spot and get your knowledge first hand.

Works of References.—"Fur Farming in Canada," by J. Walter Jones, B.A., B.S.A., is one of the most reliable and thorough works on the subject of fur farming. It deals in detail with almost every phase of the fur-farming industry and gives the names and addresses of practically all the principal companies and individuals engaged in fur farming in Canada in the beginning of 1914.

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